

Rights groups seek probe as China, Uighur emigres exchange charges

By Grace Chung

<http://www.centredaily.com/news/politics/story/1416999.html>

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, a U.S. government-backed watchdog body, said that the riots were the products of long-standing ethnic tensions.

"Chinese policies are the source of Uighur distrust and resentment, and violate internationally guaranteed freedoms China has pledged to uphold," **commission Chairman Leonard Leo told McClatchy Newspapers.**

Chinese officials dispute this.

"The nature of the riot is neither an ethnic nor a religious issue, but a grave and a violent criminal incident plotted and organized by the outside forces of terrorism, separatism and extremism," Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei said Wednesday at a news briefing.